



Contact The Durham County Board of Elections
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ELECTION SECURITY MEASURES

Durham, NC, July 17, 2016- Ballot security is paramount to the conduct of free and fair elections. The public has the right to know that the ballots that they have cast are fairly counted and that the vote totals fully and completely reflect the will of the people. As the mishandling of provisional ballots in the care of the Durham County Board of Elections staff during the March 15th Primary brought this fundamental principle into question, steps were taken to ensure that ballot security in Durham County and the provisional voting process are second to none moving forward.

Election Security Measures:

- Unvoted ballots:
 - Are kept in a backroom behind two locked doors.
 - Access is limited to only keyed staff.
 - When ballots are being assigned during supply pick up, every temporary staff member signs in and out of the room.
- Voted ballots:
 - Sealed and kept in a locked storage area behind two locked doors.
 - No temporary-staff have access, until canvass. Access is limited to only keyed staff.
- Elections Reporting Materials:
 - PCMCIA cards, ballot control forms, tabulator tapes (with results of the precincts votes) are kept in a locked cabinet behind a locked door.
 - The key to which is kept by the interim director and assigned to one other staff member for task specific reasons

Provisional Process:

- Temporary staff members (elections staff assistants) check in at precincts regarding the volume of provisional ballots over the course of the day.
- During the return audit before a Chief Judge has their election night audit completed they sit for a concurrent provisional audit. This consists of:
 - A designated experienced temporary staff member verifying the count of provisional ballots returned on the ballot control form.

- Addressing any discrepancy on the ballot control form, provisional poll book or provisional envelope(s) with the Chief Judge before they leave for the evening.
 - Once the count is verified the provisional ballots are taken to a cabinet which is locked at the end of the evening. The key is kept by the (interim) director.
- As the voter history files are uploaded they are cross-referenced with the existing ballots. If a discrepancy exists a staff member is assigned to investigate the spoiled documents envelope and other returned materials from precinct supplies to see if supporting documents can be located.
- A full training 4+ hours in length is provided, prior to provisional investigation. Examples and collective work take up the better part of a day to ensure consistent interpretation and uniform categorization.
- The provisional ballots are removed from their locked cabinet and brought to the large meeting room for investigation.
- The provisional ballot count by precinct is visible at all times during the provisional investigation. No staff member taking part in the process should feel isolated or detached from the larger process.
- Staff investigating provisionals are encouraged to ask questions and have an open discussion regarding any provisional ballot/record that they have reason to question. Full time staff are always present in the room and a long time temporary staff member who has worked on provisional investigation through multiple election cycles assigns ballots for investigation and makes himself available for questions.
- Everyone who is in the meeting room during provisional investigation signs in and out of the room.
 - Lunch is taken collectively and the room locked behind.
 - No ballots are permitted outside of this room or in the office of any employee during this time.
 - Full time staff and temporary staff work along-side one another in one room with all ballots.
 - At the end of an evening the provisional materials are collected and placed under double lock and key (in a cabinet behind a locked door) for the night. This is verified by the director who holds one key.
- At the time of county canvass the ballots are brought before the board along with the staff's report, opened under the supervision and run in their presence and in the presence of any member of the public interested in attending.
- The public is welcome to observe this process in so long as ballot security measures are not compromised.

These steps have and will continue to help to ensure that the citizens of Durham County and provisional voters now and in the future with will have no doubt that their ballot is carefully considered and steps have been taken to ensure its protection after the election.

Samuel Gedman
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Durham County Board of Elections